

## **Talking Points -California Department of Health Services**

### **Little Hoover Commission**

**November 15, 2001**

### **Examination of California's Ability to Respond to Multiple Large Scale disasters and needed improvements**

#### **Actions and Activities under the Davis Administration**

- California Anti-Terrorism Center facilitates information sharing on terrorist threats and activities
- Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) coordinates and responds to all types of hazards, including a biological or chemical terrorism event. Coordinates statewide efforts in planning
- Mobilization of the California National Guard

#### **Public Health's roles in preparing for biological or chemical attack**

- Traditional public health focuses on communicable diseases and the safety of our air, water, and food
- The public health system is now faced with the intentional spread of disease and would be challenged following a biological or chemical attack
- Importance of partners from the law enforcement and the medical communities
- Addressing public scares and hoaxes about anthrax and resulting costs

#### **Response activities**

- Development of response protocols, in concert with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, local health departments, and other state agencies
- Public health and emergency response systems in California cities
- The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's chemical and biological terrorism response and preparedness program

### **California's progress with biological and chemical terrorism preparedness**

- Expanding and developing new disease surveillance tools
- Strengthened capacity for diagnostic services
- Communications network for early notification and response
- Use of existing State Emergency Management System and tests
- Active on several subcommittees of the Governor's State Strategic Committee on Terrorism
- Initiated an enhanced communications system with our state and local partners

### **Public Health's ongoing role**

- Daily responsibility of protecting Californians and DHS expertise
- Further examples of the Department's efforts to protect against terrorism in partnership with industry groups